

# CITY OF ROCKVILLE PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

September 20, 2000

## SUBJECT:

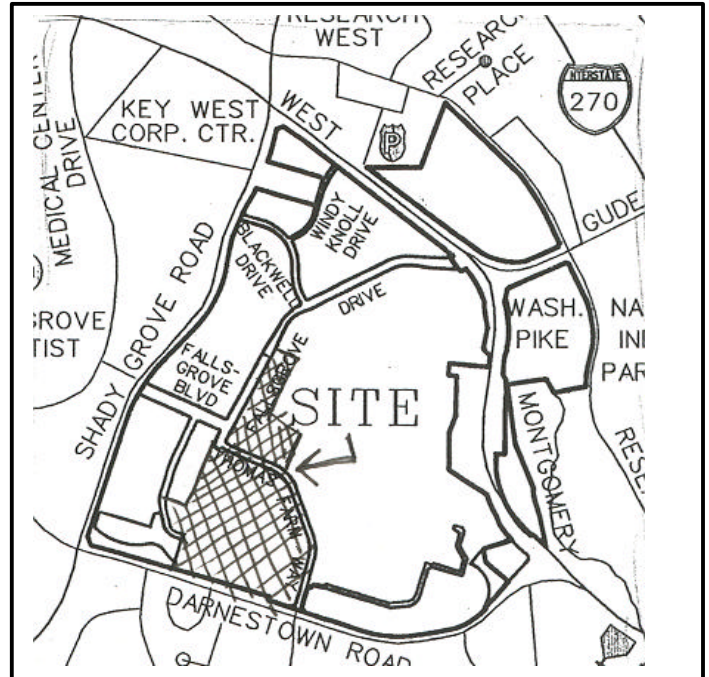
Detailed Application CPD2000-0004B for  
Comprehensive Planned Development  
CPD1999-0004, Fallsgrove

Applicant: Fallsgrove Associates  
c/o The Cox Companies  
8381 Old Courthouse Road, #160  
Vienna, VA 22182

Owner: Fallsgrove Associates

Date Filed: June 9, 2000

Location: A portion of the former Thomas Farm,  
near the corner of Darnestown Road  
and West Montgomery Avenue,  
generally described as Phase I.



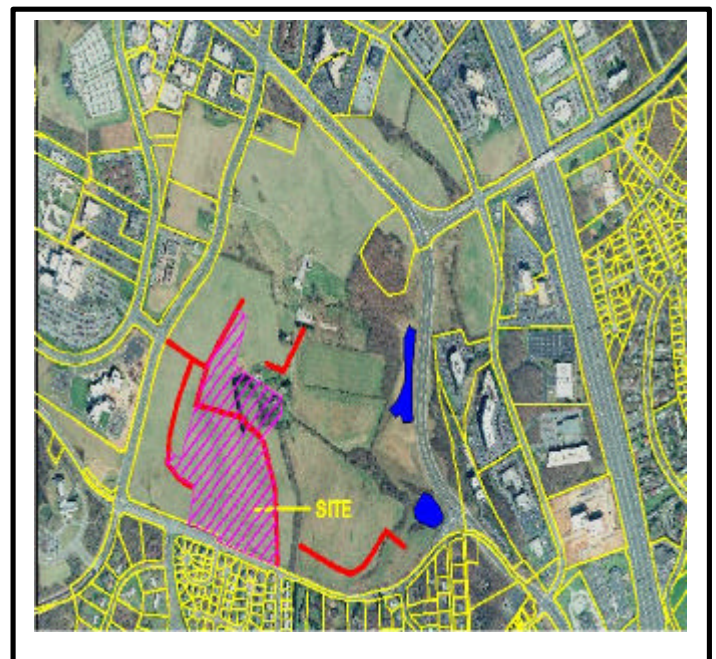
*Proposed Location*

## REQUEST:

The applicant seeks detailed (final) approval for 243 dwelling units and a 4,195 square-foot community center. The units will consist of 68 single-family detached and 136 single-family attached units. In addition, there will be 39 Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) associated with this application. The MPDUs will be in the form of one duplex containing two units and 37, 14-foot wide townhouses.

## PREVIOUS RELATED ACTIONS:

- CPD99-0004, Concept Plan Application for Comprehensive Planned Development approved by the Mayor and Council, February 22, 2000.
- CDP2000-0004A, Detailed Application for Infrastructure and Roads, Part I. Approved by the Planning Commission on July 26, 2000.



- CPD2000-0004H, Detailed Application for a stormwater management facility and a spur road. Approved by the Planning Commission on September 13, 2000.

## ANALYSIS:

### Background

On February 22, 2000, the Mayor and Council approved CPD99-0004, authorizing development on the former Thomas Farm site, now known as Falls Grove. The approval authorized a total of 1,530 dwelling units, 150,000 square feet of commercial retail and 950,000 square feet of office/research and development space. A Comprehensive Planned Development is implemented through the approval of individual detailed applications for all or part of a development as required in Section 25-656 of the Zoning Ordinance. This application is part of a series of detailed applications.

### Property Description

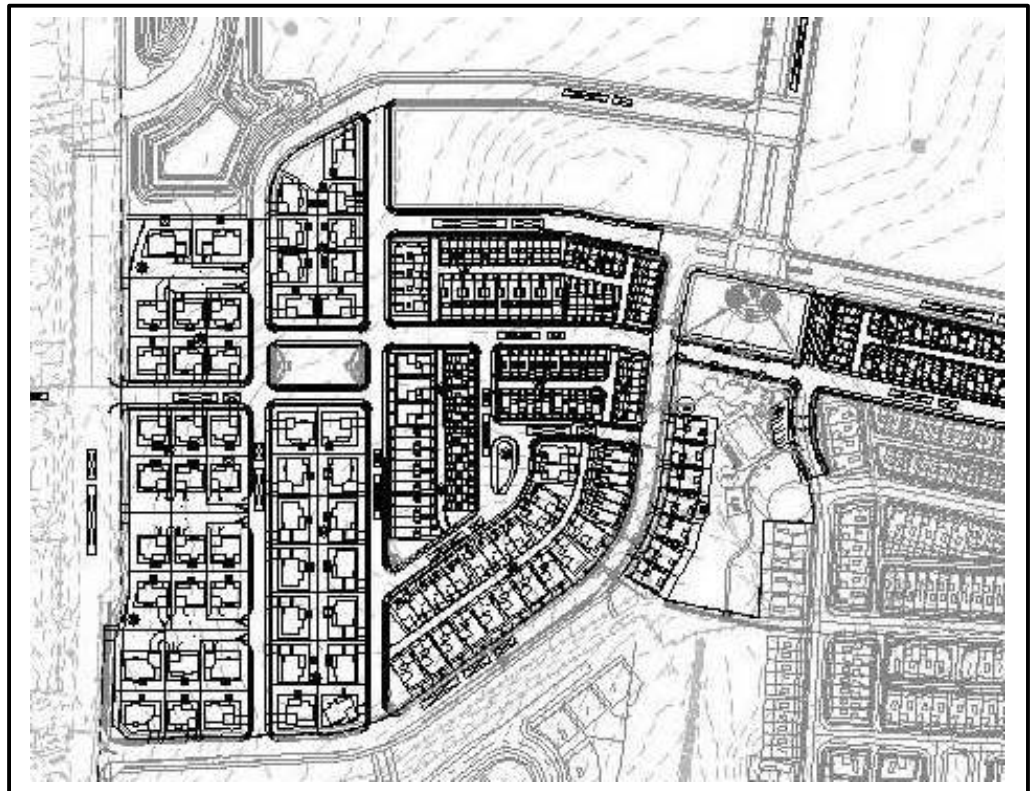
Falls Grove consists of approximately 254 acres bounded by Shady Grove Road, Darnestown Road, West Montgomery Avenue and Research Boulevard. The topography varies from rolling farmland on a majority of the site to an upland forest area near the intersection of Gude Drive and West Montgomery Avenue.

### Proposal

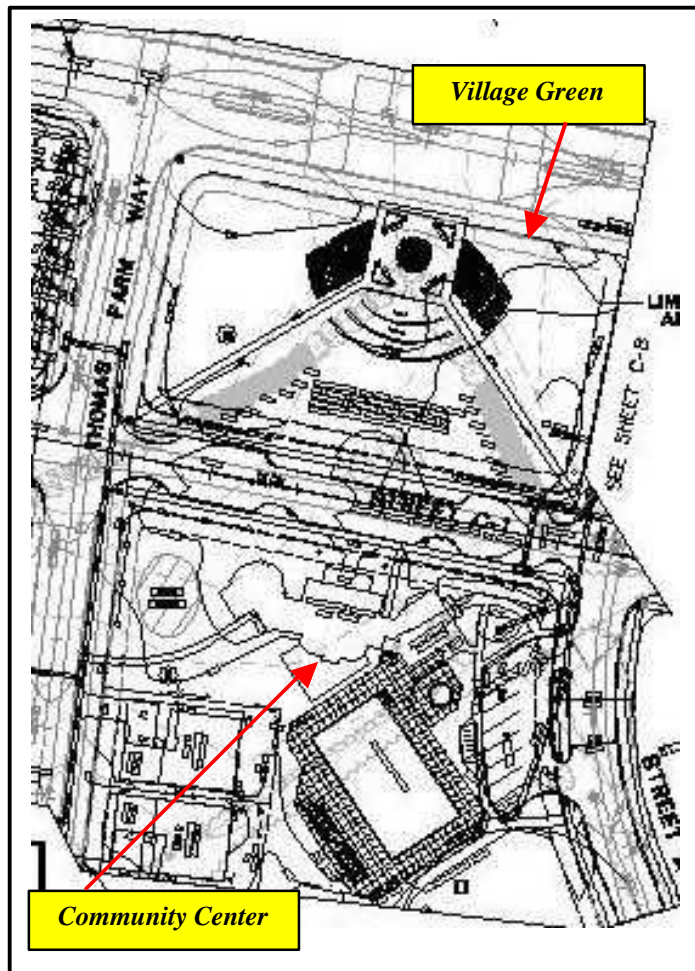
The applicant requests detailed application approval for 243 dwelling units and a 4,195 square-foot community center with a pool and amenities. As stated previously, the dwelling units will consist of 68 single-family detached units, 136 single-family attached units and 39 MPDUs.

### The Site:

The development site is located adjacent to Darnestown Road, the proposed Thomas Farm Way and the proposed Falls Grove Drive. The community center and a proposed open space civic area referred to as the Village Green Park are located where Falls Grove Drive intersects with



Fallsgrove Boulevard. There are townhouse units located adjacent to Fallsgrove Drive on the east side of the Village Green park.



The .81 acre Village Green park, which creates a visual entry feature for Fallsgrove at the terminus of Fallsgrove Boulevard, will be built by the Applicant, including landscaping, amenities and the placement of public art before being dedicated to the City of Rockville in a finished condition. The Applicant has been meeting with representatives of the Cultural Arts Commission regarding the placement of art in this park. The Developer is required by the resolution of approval to contribute a minimum of \$75,000 for the placement of this public art. The type of art and specific placement location in the Village Green Park will be determined by the applicant through consultation with the Cultural Arts Commission.

The park and the community center are adjacent to each other, separated by a residential street. A note on the plans indicates that this street may be closed by the HOA for special events with permission from the City.

The community center will contain a pool, bathhouse and facilities for the residents of Fallsgrove. There will also be playground facilities and benches associated with this site. In addition to the above, there will be pedestrian and bike paths connecting the community center and park to other areas of Fallsgrove. In particular, there is a bike and pedestrian path that connects the community center to the Millennium Trail to the direct south of this development.

There are additional open space areas with amenities located throughout the development.

### The Single Family Detached Units:

The majority of the single-family detached units are to the west side of the development, adjacent to Darnestown Road. These units are consistent with the land use on the west side of Darnestown Road, which is



also single-family detached. Most of the Single family detached homes will be a more traditional single family detached style, with seven-foot side setbacks and front and side loaded garages. There is, however, a component of the single-family detached units that are a smaller footprint “patio” style home with reduced setbacks. These 20 patio homes are generally located adjacent to the proposed Thomas Farm Way. These homes, as per the Concept Plan, will have four-foot setbacks, and are precluded from having mechanical equipment within the side yards. Of these 20 homes, 13 will be rear-loaded and seven will be front-loaded garages.

A unique feature of this area of the development is the housing units that are adjacent to Darnestown Road. There are four blocks of six houses each, as well as two separate units to the extreme north,



that are accessed via one way “loop lanes” that will facilitate the driveways of these houses. All the houses will all face the loop lanes, which in turn access what is referenced on the plan as “Street A-1.” The right-of-way for these loop lanes will be dedicated to the

***Patio Homes***

Homeowner’s Association. Dedication to the HOA allows for the individual lots to maintain required road frontage (through pipestem lots) while retaining the desired relationship to the loop lanes and Darnestown Road. There will be planting in the median of these streets. These medians will function as SWM facilities. The loop lanes preclude the need for pavement intensive cul-de-sacs, and eliminate houses backing to Darnestown Road. By virtue of the siting of the lots adjacent to the loop lanes, only the sides of the houses at the end of the loop lanes will face Darnestown Road. This will result in a more visually appealing streetscape from Darnestown Road. Also, there will a future Detailed Application for the landscape treatment along Darnestown Road.

**The Single Family Attached Units:**

This application includes 136 townhouses. They will be a combination of thirty-two 22-foot wide units, eighty-seven 18-foot wide units and seventeen 32 and 34-foot wide units. These units appear in a variety of locations throughout the development, with the most prominent locations being



adjacent to the proposed Falls Grove Drive. These units represent a majority of the development's density, and are located in areas closest to the community facilities, as well as the transit center that is associated with the proposed retail center adjacent to Falls Grove Drive.

There will be a variety of architecture associated with these units, with the recently approved design guidelines outlining architectural restraints on the repetition of features and other requirements.

### **Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs)**

There are 39 MPDUs associated with this application, and they are dispersed throughout the development. As per the Concept Plan, no block will contain more than 33 percent MPDUs. The dispersal and number of MPDUs (16 percent of the total number of units provided) is consistent with the Concept Plan. There will be two MPDUs in one duplex unit within the single-family detached area, and 37 MPDUs will be located within 14-foot wide townhomes (see attachment 3).

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Approval is recommended, subject to the following conditions:

1. Submission, for approval by the Chief of Planning, of eleven (11) copies of the site plan, revised according to Planning Commission Exhibit A.
2. Submission, for approval by the Department of Public Works (DPW), of the following detailed plans, studies and computations:
  - a. Stormwater Management (SWM) concept computations to support the plan for the on-site BMPs.
  - b. Sediment control plans.
  - c. Public Improvement plans (water and sewer, storm drain and paving, street tree and lighting).
  - d. Any notes on the plans.
3. No permits shall be issued until approval by Montgomery County of the proposed spur road and SWM area as outlined within Detailed Application CPD2000-0004H.
4. Bonds be posted and permits obtained from DPW and MDE.
5. Submission for the approval of the Chief of Planning, of 11 copies of a Landscape Plan that is revised according to Planning Commission Exhibit B.
6. All street names must be established and approved by the Planning Commission as outlined in Section 25-742(b)(7) of the Zoning Ordinance. No record plats will be accepted until street names are established by the Planning Commission.

7. Occupancy permits for lots served by the sewage pump station will not be issued until the pump station is constructed and accepted by DPW. Building permits will not be issued until construction of the pump station is substantially completed as determined by DPW.
8. Obtain permits from Montgomery County for utilities and access.
9. Ponds 1, 2, & 3 must be permitted by Rockville and MSCD prior to the issuance of any DPW permit that allows the creation of impervious area. Ponds 2 & 3 require approval by MSHA.
10. SWM regional participation contribution for contiguous right-of-way must be made prior to DPW permit issuance that allows the creation of impervious area.
11. Loop streets are private and must be maintained by the HOA. HOA documents must include a provision for maintenance.
12. No parking will be allowed on the loop streets. Loop streets should have curb and gutter, and be designed to the City pavement standard.
13. Overland flow between lots to the proposed BMP's should be avoided. Drainage should be directed to the street, and piped to the BMP's.
14. The community center drive aisle must meet code requirements, signing and marking must be provided, handicap parking must be provided.
15. Slot drains will not be accepted by DPW.
16. All MPDUs must be FHA certified.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Traffic

A traffic study was done as part of the Concept Plan approval, and this application is in compliance with the approved Concept Plan. Mitigation of the traffic impacts were required as part of the Concept Plan. Mitigation measures include the construction of improvements to 12 intersections, construction of a transit center, payment of \$1.6 million for Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures, and construction of on-site roads.



This application does not trigger any traffic-related improvements.

### **Parking**

Based on the number of residences and the size of the community center, the development is required to have 499 parking spaces. There will be 503 spaces provided in the form of garage and driveway spaces and parallel parking on private streets. The community center will have an angled parking area of 8 spaces adjacent to a residential street referenced on the plans as "Street A-3." This angle parking area will be accessed via a one-way drive. The eight spaces will be six regular spaces and two handicap spaces.

There will be 136 spaces provided for the single-family detached houses and 350 spaces for the single-family attached houses. All of the required parking for the units is maintained on each block. In addition, parallel parking spaces on private streets will be delineated, but are not included in the required parking numbers. Parking on public streets shall not be striped, and is not included in the required parking numbers for the site. Parking will not be allowed on the loop roads that are to be part of the HOA dedication. Twenty-six houses are to be served by these loop roads.

### **Pedestrian Access and Bicycle Paths**

The community center and the Village Green park at the terminus of Fallsgrove Boulevard, which is a prominent focus of the neighborhood, connects to the entire Fallsgrove site via a network of paths. There is a pedestrian/bike path that connects the community center and park to the Millennium Trail to the south this path is located adjacent to a SWM BMP that was approved through Detailed Application CPD2000-0004A. There is also a series of paths that connect to the various residential areas and the retail site.

### **Transit**

The Concept Plan shows a multi-modal transit center as part of the retail center. This development is adjacent to the retail center and is directly across from the transit center. This development will provide easy access via walking or biking to on-site amenities, the amenities and transit facilities associated with the retail center, and overall community facilities located within close proximity.

## **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT**

The SWM facility located at the intersection of Shady Grove Road and Darnestown Road serves this site. This SWM area, approved by Detailed Application CPD2000-0004H, is an area the approved Concept Plan has identified as a SWM and Transportation dedication area. The ponds with this SWM facility are referenced on the approved Detailed Application as ponds 1A and 1B. The SWM facility is to be bisected by rough grading for a proposed spur road connection from Darnestown Road to Shady Grove Road. The ponds will be dedicated to the City of Rockville, with the spur road right-of-way ultimately being transferred to Montgomery County for the construction and maintenance of the spur road connection.

A condition of approval for this application is that the final SWM facility/spur road design, as approved by the City of Rockville Planning Commission, receives approval by Montgomery County.

## **LANDSCAPING**

There is approximately 10.20 acres of open and green space proposed with this application. A landscape plan for the site has been provided as Planning Commission Exhibit "B." Of this total open space, the Village Green park encompasses approximately .81 acres, and the community center and pool area covers approximately 2.05 acres.

In addition, the Subdivision Ordinance requires three trees be provided per residential lot. The approved Concept Plan contains a provision that if the three trees per lot requirement cannot be accommodated on each lot, the balance may be made up in designated areas of each block. This provision ensures that each block will have the required number of trees as required by the Subdivision Ordinance.

## **Forest/Tree Preservation**

See condition number five (5).

## **Equipment Screening**

All transformers or telecommunications equipment is required by the City of Rockville to be placed underground. Any equipment that the applicant proposes to place above ground must be approved in accordance with the submission and approval of a waiver of the city's underground utility requirements. This waiver must be approved by the City of Rockville Planning Commission.

## **STAFF COMMENTS**

This application is consistent with the approved Concept Plan, and staff recommends approval subject to the conditions listed earlier. Staff believes the layout of the site is functional and convenient, with all of the dwelling units having easy access to neighborhood and community amenities, such as the Village Green park and community center/pool. In addition, the retail center with its multi-modal transit center is adjacent to the site.

Staff also believes the loop road proposal is acceptable, proving to be a unique design feature that eliminates traditional cul-de-sac development. This ultimately will have the effect of creating a more visually appealing streetscape from the Darnestown Road frontage of Fallsgrove.

Staff endorses this application as meeting the full intent of the approved Concept Plan and the accompanying resolution.

## NOTIFICATION

Notices were sent to approximately 1,650 residences, businesses and association presidents. Some of the subdivisions include, but were not limited to, Glenora Hills, Rockshire, the Willows, Carter Hill, Watts Branch Meadows, Cambridge Heights, Ivy Woods and Flintledge Estates.

## APPROVAL LIMITATIONS

Section 25-193(d) of the Zoning Ordinance requires that **construction or operation must commence within two (2) years of the date of this decision or application approval shall expire.** If the applicant can show just cause, a maximum of two (2) time extensions may be granted by the Planning Commission, each not to exceed one year. However, time extensions are not automatically approved, and sufficient detail and justification will be required in order for the Planning Commission to consider granting an extension.

## CONCLUSION

Staff believes that this application is consistent with the approved Concept Plan approved by the Mayor and Council for this area of Fallsgrove. As a result, staff recommends approval of Detailed Application CPD2000-0004B for 243 residential units and the accompanying community center and pool, with the conditions noted above.

Attachments